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LARSON: CITY OF HARTFORD & BUSHNELL AWARDED NEA FUNDING TO SUPPORT I-QUILT PROJECT, HARTFORD REDEVELOPMENT

Washington, DC- Today, U.S. Congressman John B. Larson (CT-01) announced that the City of Hartford and the Bushnell Performing Arts Center will receive federal funding to invest in an innovative initiative to enhance Hartford's downtown region. The National Endowment for the Arts (NEA) awarded \$250,000, the largest amount bestowed on any grant recipient, to support the I-Quilt project, an innovative plan to produce a safe, more sustainable community by better incorporating the city's transit, cultural, and housing resources.

"This award is a testament to the great partnership that exists between the federal government, the City of Hartford, the state, and community partners such as the Bushnell. The I-Quilt project is an initiative that will economically and culturally strengthen our capital city for the better," said Congressman Larson. ***"Hartford is an unpolished gem, home to numerous cultural assets that can stimulate growth and development throughout the city***

I-Quilt will help us leverage our resources to create a more sustainable, vibrant city for our residents and visitors."

The goal of I-Quilt is to connect Hartford's key cultural sites and institutions as a means to support the cultural and economic redevelopment of the Capitol district. The project will

complement the ongoing state, city and private sector efforts to revitalize Hartford's economy and neighborhoods.

Congressman Larson has long supported the I-Quilt initiative and was influential in bringing foremost authorities in sustainable communities, including Congressman Earl Blumenauer of Oregon, Chairman of the House Livable Communities Task Force, and U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development Deputy Secretary Ron Sims, to Hartford to learn firsthand about the I-Quilt project.

"I am proud to have invited national leaders in sustainable communities such as Congressman Blumenauer and Deputy Secretary Sims to Hartford to hear this proposal firsthand. They both praised the project for its vision and ability to solve challenges while capturing the cultural history and commercial future of the city," added Congressman Larson.

"I am a true believer in the efforts of the city, the Bushnell, and all of the private and public partners who support this project."

The NEA awarded the funding as a part of the Mayors' Institute on City Design 25th Anniversary Initiative, a program that supports projects in communities across the nation focused on planning, design, and arts engagement programs.

In total, 21 matching grants were awarded to cities and community groups across the country, amounting to an investment of \$3 million on behalf of the NEA.

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